

III. REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claim 1 is canceled, claims 2-4,6,10-13,16, and 22 are amended, and new claim 23 is added. Claims 1-23 are presented for further consideration.

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-2 stand rejected under 35USC103(a) based on the reference Bilezikjian, U.S. Patent No. 5,735,716. Claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35USC112. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his rejection in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Applicant has amended the claims of this application to recite the combination of features for which protection is sought in this application. Accordingly, it is submitted that the Examiner's rejection of the claims under 35USC112 are fully met by the above amendments.

Discussion of the Cited Reference

The Examiner relies on the reference Bilezikian to support the rejection based on obviousness. The cited reference describes a connector having a tubular housing 24 defining a female receptacle 10 for engagement with a male connector pin 20. Electrical contact is established by means of a deformable sleeve 26 which collapses into contact with the pin 20 as the pin 20 is inserted in the receptacle 10. The sleeve 26 is constructed with multiple spring arms 38. A collar 28 forms an opening for insertion of pin 20 into receptacle 10 and locking tabs 34 engage pin 18 for retention in the connected position.

In accordance with new claim 23, the connector of this application has a housing 11 into which a male contacting part 2 may be inserted. At least a pair of contact clips 3 are attached to annular crown 31 which surrounds the cylindrical portion 12 that encloses the housing 11. The clips are constructed with radially inward extending contact ends 33 that engage the male contacting element 2 through the cylindrical portion 12. Engagement between contact ends 33 and male contact part 2 forms the electrical connection through crown 31.

It is submitted that, in accordance with the above descriptions, the connector of the cited reference operates significantly differently than the connector described in the claims of this application. The deformable sleeve of Bilezikjian is positioned within the receptacle, while clips of the subject application are outside the receptacle. Electrical contact is accomplished in Bilezikjian by the deformation of the internal sleeve, while electric contact in the subject connector is accomplished by the resilient engagement of the clips. There are no longitudinally extending contact clips formed on an exterior crown in the connector of Bilezikjian.

The Issue of Obviousness

It is well settled that in order to establish a prima facie case for obviousness, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, without reference to the disclosure of this application.

Applicant submits that because of the above described deficiencies, the reference Bilzekjian does not support a prima-


facie case of obviousness. The modification of the connector of Bilezekjian, in order to obtain the invention, as described in the claims submitted herein, would not have been obvious to one skilled in the art.

The above arguments apply equally to the rejected dependent claims.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,



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26 May 2005
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